

## BLEATING DEACON'S CORNER



## EXPLORING AA MYTHS

I WANT to get some gripes out of the way about things I hear at meetings which are pure baloney, whether this bleating deacon or somebody else spouts them.

1. "There are no musts in AA." Who sez? Obviously, somebody who hasn't learned that we *must* not take the first drink if we want to stay sober. Or somebody who has looked only superficially at the program of recovery described in the Big Book. Glance at Pages 14, 44, 73, 74, 79, and 85. You'll find at least eight "musts." And what about the self-imposed *musts* we all use?

2. "This is a selfish program." When I acted that way, I got drunk. It is, to be sure, a self-survival program, but the way to self-survival, we are clearly shown in AA, is being unselfish.

3. "This is a cafeteria-style program." When I was a child and got loose in a cafeteria I usually carefully

picked and chose five or six desserts, and got awfully sick.

4. "We are not concerned with the *cause* of our illness, only with recovery." On Page 82 of "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" you'll find, beginning on Line 16, a flat statement about the cause of alcoholism. Most of the Twelve Steps work at *removing* causes.

5. "I've never read the Big Book ... or I only take Steps One and Twelve . . . and yet I stay sober." Accent is usually heard on the "I." Did you ever hear an illiterate ignoramus brag that he's so much smarter than other folks he didn't need to go to school to make *his* fortune? When I boasted I could stay sober easier than others because I was smarter than many, I got drunk. Even if you don't, isn't that a tasteless example of un-humility?

6. "I don't care anything about AA's organization—I just know I'm

sober." Did any real drunk ever make it a practice to throw away two-thirds or even one-third of every drink or bottle? Why settle for less than the fullest, deepest benefits of sobriety, including those in AA's Second and Third Legacies, not just the First? When I stopped at One, mine was a dry and joyless aridity. Richness of recovery comes with the full AA draught, examples keep showing me. Why be a foam-sipper only?

7. "He wasn't ready for it yet" is one of the excuses I give my guilty self when I haven't worked very hard at a sponsoring responsibility.

8. "Nobody but an alcoholic can understand another alcoholic." Non-

alcoholics who have understood us very well—and still loved us—include one Dr. Silkworth, a certain Rev. Shoemaker, a Father Dowling, a Sister Ignatia, a Mr. Jack Alexander, a Dr. Jung, a Dr. Tiebout, a Lois W., an Anne S. and others.

9. Any sentence that begins "All alcoholics are ..." or "Like a typical alcoholic. . . ."

10. "Some of us are sicker than others." Mebbe so, but who in AA is qualified to make such professional, diagnoses? When I say this I'm just throwing up my hands on a tough case, or politely saying I don't like somebody's behavior or ideas. Get that—I don't like!!!!

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